

CHINA AND JAPAN.

MR. BURLINGAME'S MISSION—EARTHQUAKES IN
EASTERN ASIA.
From Our Own Correspondent.
SHANGHAI, Jan. 16, 1898.
Comments on the appointment of Mr. Burlingame
by the Chinese Government its Ambassador to all the
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less form the principal theme of the communication

life. It contains too many facts for a full subject of speculation and discussion in the country. We have no means of ascertaining public opinion among the Chinese on a question of this character; indeed, our officials, those who in private life are connected in one way or another with foreigners, are aware of the appointments of such men, there are very few who are ignorant of its bearing. It is not surprising, therefore, that this revolution in Chinese policy has attracted most attention, and as British material interests are of more value than those of all other nationalities combined, and as all the eight newspapers published in China are English, English opinion has become best known.

At the first appearance of the spontaneity of the affair on the part of the Government of His Majesty Tungchee is doubted. As this Government admits of no equal with foreign States, it is thought incredible that a foreigner should be so much interested in the management, should be the spontaneous suggestion of a Chinese statesman. Its origin is attributed to Mr. Hart, the Inspector-General of Maritime Customs, who is now represented as looking forward to the time when he might wish to retire from his present position, which is worth about £30,000, to an universal ambassadorship, worth nearly half that sum in the estimation of the Chinese population. It is also said that if the mission had been proposed without revision that has been stipulated for it must have reference to either of two things, viz. that the Chi-

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Regarded from this point of view, it may be questioned if the success of the embassy would be an unqualified advantage, for, when a government can only be maintained by the aid of a foreign loan, it is exposed to its subjects and an international judicase.

Nevertheless, we have good grounds for the belief that great good will accrue from Mr. Burlingame's mission, both because the ex-United States Minister is a man of high character and high ability, and because it commits the Chinese to a renunciation of principles and ideas that have long retarded their advancement.

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money in purchasing foreign weapons and steamers. Chief of these princes is the ruler of Satsuma, the most southern of the provinces of Japan. The daimios were at first opposed to foreign intercourse, but when it appeared that foreign commerce was adding to the power and wealth of the central Government, they demanded the right of opening their ports to the stranger, and to share in the profits which accrued from maritime traffic. Hence the civil war that occurred a Year ago, and hence the conflict that has just taken place, the former weakening the Shogun, and the latter almost annihilating his power and authority.

It would be weary the reader were I to describe the military operations that attended the late struggle on the shores of the Inland Sea, and it would not add much to his stock of useful knowledge were I to give an analysis of the manifold causes which the event has brought forth. It is necessary to have the politics of a score of other nations to study, and the policy of home nations to consider, and I do not care to be particularly in the disquieting, the intriguing, of a petty empire. Suffice it to say that the Statshashi has been deposed, and the Shogunate abolished. The power of the Mikado, titular sovereign (spiritual Emperor of the books) has been restored, but restrained by a council, where the daimios are dominant; in short, the form of double rule has been retained, and the old native government smothered.

We shall be much disappointed if this revolution does not prove a blessing to Japan. It is likely to secure for foreigners all the kindness they can reasonably ask, and lead to the melioration of the condition of the masses socially, morally, and intellectually, and, perhaps, as a further consequence to their improvement physically.

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are, on the contrary, inclined to retrograde or stand still. If progress be the import of the mission, the reason is that the Chinese Government has not yet decided what it has here will and the representatives of the foreign powers only too happy to welcome any steps in advance. If, however, as I thought more likely, the mission is intended to bring about a change of policy on the part of the Chinese, it restrains the action of the treaty powers, then must the mission be regarded as a failure. It is, therefore, not surprising that the advocates of these views are hoping that foreign cabinets will give a cold shoulder to Mr. Burlingame.

It is matter of little consequence whether the idea of a mission to China was suggested by someone or whether it was suggested by a foreign cabinet, or which we knew was not the case. If Mr. Hart did suggest the mission, it is another proof of his fitness for the post. It is a proof of his independence of mind and will no doubt appear in the sequel that Mr. Burlingame's services will conduce to promote alliance between Chinese and foreign interests.

It is not the subject of the mission, it is the manner in which it is conducted, which is of importance. It may be its principal aim, is the negotiation of a loan. Certain it is, Lungche's Cabinet is in want of funds for which they can give ample security and pay the interest at a low rate. It is not the subject of the mission, but the manner in which it is conducted, which is of importance. It may be its principal aim, is the negotiation of a loan by the Peking Government would be a master-stroke of policy. A National debt would be a national blessing. English capital is not so scarce as it used to be.

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